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RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF BELLINGHAM

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND SANITARY INSPECTOR.

1952.

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OFFICERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

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ANNUAL REPORT of the MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH

for BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

for the

YEAR ENDED 31st. DECEMBER, 1952.

There has been no change in the boundaries of the Rural District, the area of which remains at 246,645 acres or approx. 380 square miles.

The population, according to the Registrar General's estimate, is 5,326, a fall of 239. Some of this may be accounted for by the evacuation of Kielder Camp and the fall in the numbers of the children at Brownrigg Camp School.

Number of inhabited houses in the area at the end of 1952, according to the Rate Book	1,537.
Rateable value	£43,846.
Sum represented by Penny Rate	£180 - 7 - 8.9d

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

There has been little change in social conditions and industry in the area.

The small landsale colliery at Hareshaw Head has now closed down and there has been a gradual extension of Forestry operations especially in the Western and North Western parts of the area. The principle industry still remains farming.

The woollen mill at Otterburn is still in operation and there area one or two quarries operating in the district.

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EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS.

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Live Births, legitimate	68.	27.	41.
Live Births, illegitimate	3.	1.	2.
Total Live Births	71.		

One noteworthy fact is that the female births far out-number the males.

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 13.33

This compares with a Rate of 15.3 for England and Wales.

Stillbirths ..... Nil.

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Deaths	68.	31.	37.

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 12.76

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES.

Puerperal Sepsis	Nil.
Other puerperal causes	Nil.
Total	Nil.

VITAL STATISTICS OF THE BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT DURING 1950, 1951 and 1952.

	Population estimated to the middle of each year.	BIRTHS.			TOTAL DEATHS registered in the district.		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS.		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Uncorrected No.	NETT.						Under 1 year.		All ages.	
			No.	Rate.	No.	Rate.	Outward.	Inward.	No.	Rate per 1000 net births	No.	Rate.
1950.	5683.	32	73	12.84	51	8.97	2	19	2	27.77	72	12.669
1951.	5565.	29	83	15.18	52	9.34	2	42	3	36.14	92	16.53
1952.	5326.	24	71	13.33	45	8.44	-	23	2	28.16	68	12.76

DEATHS REGISTERED DURING 1952 AND THE CAUSES.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	NETT DEATHS of RESIDENTS whether occurring within or without the district.		
	MALE.	FEMALE.	TOTAL.
Carcinoma of Stomach.	1	0	1
Carcinoma of Lung.	1	0	1
Other sites Carcinoma.	2	2	4
Tuberculosis of Lung.	0	1	1
Syphilitic Disease.	0	1	1
Vascular lesion of Nervous System.	6	6	12
Coronary Disease.	3	7	10
Hypertension with Heart Disease.	0	2	2
Other Cardiac conditions.	10	9	19
Circulatory diseases.	0	1	1
Pneumonia.	0	3	3
Bronchitis.	2	0	2
Peptic Ulcer.	2	0	2
Gastritis Enteritis Diarrhoea.	1	0	1
Nephritis.	0	2	2
Other defined and illdefined diseases.	2	2	4
Motor vehicle accidents.	1	0	1
Other accidents.	0	1	1
TOTALS.	31	37	68

INFANT MORTALITY, 1952.

Nett Deaths from stated causes at various ages under one year.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 week.	1 - 2 weeks.	2 - 3 weeks.	3 - 4 weeks.	Total under one month.	1 - 3 months.	3 - 6 months.	6 - 9 months.	9 - 12 months.	Total under one year.
Prematurity.	1				1					1
Inhalation of vomit during attack of Gastro-enteritis.							1			1
	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR.

All infants per 1,000 live births	28.17
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births	29.41
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 live births	Nil.
Deaths from measles	Nil.
Deaths from whooping-cough	Nil.
Deaths from diarrhoea	Nil.

The most frequent cause of death has been from some form of heart disease. Thirty one cases out of sixty eight deaths having been classified under this heading.

Cerebral haemorrhage comes next on the list with twelve deaths and next, we have carcinoma six deaths. Only one case of carcinoma of the lung died during the year but recent investigations have disclosed that the vast majority of carcinomata of the lung occur in smokers, only a very tiny proportion being non-smokers. This fact gives food for thought.

Only one case of tuberculosis of the lung died during the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The year opened very auspiciously, there were no notifications of infectious diseases in January and practically no influenza.

February was also good as there was very little influenza and only a few scattered cases of german measles, mumps and chicken-pox.

In March there were many cases of mumps in the Otterburn area of a mild type and a few cases of chicken-pox at Woodburn. Influenza was conspicuous by its comparative absence.

The epidemic of mumps at Otterburn continued throughout April. There were also a few scattered cases of german measles and chickenpox. One case of scarlet fever and one of erysipelas were also notified.

In the month of May the epidemic of mumps was still progressing at Otterburn and spread to Bellingham. There was one case of measles and a number of cases of german measles and one case of abdominal tuberculosis.

In June one case of cerebral spinal meningitis occurred in a very small child. All contacts were closely watched but there were no further cases. There were also two cases of measles, a few scattered cases of mumps and many cases of german measles scattered throughout the area.

July saw the epidemic of german measles and mumps still prominent. The disease, undoubtedly being spread through the schools at Bellingham and Otterburn. There was one case of measles.

The closing of the schools at the end of July resulted in the abrupt termination of the epidemics of mumps and german measles.

One case of paratyphoid B. occurred, the case being diagnosed in hospital. Extensive investigations as to the probable source failed to discover it and from the history of the patients movements, beforehand, it was concluded that infection had occurred outside this area. Samples of urine and faeces of all contacts were negative and no further cases occurred. The patient returned home after a short stay in hospital, the faeces being still positive and every precaution was taken to prevent anybody else becoming infected. The subsequent successive examinations of excreta were found to be negative.

The opening of the schools in September resulted in a few cases of measles, especially at Kielder, and two cases in Bellingham which were suspiciously like scarlet fever.

The sudden spell of cold weather in September resulted in quite a sharp outbreak of influenza.

In October there was one case of scarlet fever at Ridsdale, infection being outside the area, and there were also still a few cases of measles. There were quite a number of streptococcal sore throats at Brownrigg Camp School. These were closely watched in case some of them might be scarlet fever - the epidemic soon died out.

There was very little infectious disease in November except one or two cases of mumps and one or two cases of german measles. There were quite a number of persistent diarrhoea cases but examination of numerous samples of faeces proved the absence of pathogenic organisms and the conclusion arrived at was that these cases were influenza of a gastro-intestinal type.

In December there was only one case of german measles and a few cases of mild influenza. The epidemic of diarrhoea had died out.

CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Most of the infectious diseases, with the exception of the typhoid group and the cerebro spinal meningitis, are dealt with at home. It is very difficult to get a case of scarlet fever into hospital. This, I think, is a backward step as the complications of scarlet fever are very serious and damaging and I feel that these cases should be dealt with in an Infectious Diseases Hospital.

In the past, too, scarlatina antitoxin has been used with great success, both in treating the patient with scarlet fever and also contacts, to prevent the spread of the disease, but, for some unknown reason, scarlatina antitoxin is extremely difficult to obtain.

As a result of mass immunisation, diphtheria appears to have been wiped out. No case has occurred in the area for many years.

The same cannot be said about whooping-cough, although there are many vaccines available for the prevention and treatment of this disease, they cannot be described as highly successful, but the day may not be far away when whooping-cough will be wiped out in the same way as diphtheria has been. Fortunately, no case of whooping-cough has occurred this year.

DISEASE.	TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED.	CASES ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL.	TOTAL DEATHS.
Erysipelas.	2		
Scarlet Fever.	2		
Measles.	9		
Meningitis.	1	1	
Paratyphoid B.	1	1	
Renal Tuberculosis.	1	1	

From the above table it will be seen that, considering the population, there have been remarkably few cases of notifiable diseases in 1952.

German measles, mumps and chicken-pox are not notifiable. There were no cases of whooping-cough.

This discloses a very satisfactory state of affairs.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Laboratory Facilities.

The Government Laboratory in Newcastle General Hospital continues to give rapid and very efficient service.

Ambulance Service.

The local ambulance is administered by the Red Cross and is kept fully occupied.

There are also certain taxi-owners in the area who run Hospital cars. I am sorry to say, however, that there is no Hospital car available at Otterburn and in some cases this involves extra mileage.

Nursing in the Home.

The five District Nurses covering the area are all provided with cars and are supplemented by an excellently run corps of Home Helps, organised by the County Council. This branch of the Health Service is adequately and efficiently covered.

Four Maternity and Chil Welfare centres, staffed by the County Council, operate at Bellingham, Otterburn, Kielder and Wark.

The services of the County Health Visitors who cover the area are invaluable and they work in close harmony with the General Practitioners in the district.

Signed: G. W. L. Kirk, M.B., Ch.B.

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT for YEAR

ENDED 31st. DECEMBER, 1952.

Sanitary Circumstances in the Area.

WATER.

The operation of the Newcastle & Gateshead Water Order, 1950, has become a practical proposition and the "phased" policy, alluded to in previous reports, is becoming an accomplished fact. Phase 1 - Reedsmouth, Bellingham, Charlton Lanehead and Greenhaugh is almost complete, apart from the construction of a further service resevoir.

Kirkwhelpington - 6 Council Houses.

Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company carried out works to provide a water supply to these 6 Council houses.

Falstone.

Protracted negotiations between the Forestry Commission, Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company and the Local Authority have not proved successful to date.

General.

Detail statistics provided in the 1951 report in the main hold good. However, private supplies, throughout the area, have been considerably improved, as shown in the attached tables.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

LOCAL AUTHORITY.

West Woodburn Sewerage & Sewage Disposal Scheme.

This scheme, approved last year, is now in progress and early completion is essential in order to accommodate the drainage from the 20 Council houses under construction at West Woodburn.

Schemes in respect of Wark, Greenhaugh and Lanehead, have been prepared by the Council's Consultants and submitted to the Ministry for its consideration.

The isolated nature of the Rural District, together with the comparatively small population settlements, reflects a high cost per house in respect of these schemes.

It is a matter of higher policy to consider whether, (a) because of the high capital cost involved, such rural schemes should be abandoned or deferred, or (b) the provision of such schemes with improved sanitation is the only satisfactory means of ensuring the stabilisation of the rural population.

SCHEMES OTHER THAN LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Forestry Commission.

Kielder	Works in progress.
Mouseyhaugh	do.
Stonehaugh Shields	do.
Byrness	do.

CONVERSIONS.

54 conversions have been carried out from privy to water carriage system.

HOUSING.

Local Authority Building.

During the year, 12 houses have been constructed and occupied. High priority in rehousing is given to families occupying properties condemned and of sub-standard character.

Private Building.

4 houses have been constructed - 2 at Otterburn and 2 at Rochester.

The Forestry Commission are making good progress on new settlement areas at Stonehaugh Shield, Wark, Kielder and Byrness.

HOUSING ACT, 1949. Improvement - Reconditioning.

As was reflected in 1951, no use has been made, by owners, of this Act, during the year under review. Being essentially an agricultural area, part reason may be found under the subsequent heading.

HILL FARMING ACT, 1946 as amended by LIVESTOCK REARING ACT, 1951.

Here, a steady increase in the use of this Act is being maintained. Against 16 applications for reconditioning of farmhouses and farm cottages approved in 1951, some 54 have been approved in 1952. It is again emphasised that these improvement works are an important factor in the stabilising of the rural population.

GENERAL.

With the searchlight of higher policy focussed on repair and reconditioning of older and sub-standard properties, the surmounting of the problem is not one which meets with easy solution. Early consideration of rent reform - repeatedly urged by the Sanitary Inspectors' Association - is an essential prerequisite to adequate action for dealing with unfit and sub-standard houses.

The diminishing of local crafts again presents a further stumbling block reflected in slowing up progress or higher costs consequent on obtaining labour from a distance - varying in instances from 20 to 40 miles.

BUILDING LICENCES.

Licences issued during the year numbered 11.

Total value for the year £4,750.

SALVAGE.

A long term contract for disposal of waste paper has obviated difficulties of disposal as demand has fluctuated and, although the financial yield is not great, due to considerable reduction in prices, the habit formed by householders of saving salvage during the war years, has been sustained.

Collected during the year:	Tons.	Cwts.	Qrs.
Mixed papers:		11	2
Books and magazines:	3	12	3
Fibreboard containers:	4	10	-
Newspapers:		12	3
TOTAL:	9	7	-

Receipts for year : £61. 16. 5d.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

One Operator is in the employ of the Council and methods of treatment are those approved by the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries. The value of the service cannot be assessed in terms of charges levied.

Treatments:

Sewers: Regular and systematic treating in Bellingham and Wark.

Farms and Business Premises:	38
Tips:	15
Other properties:	64
TOTAL TREATMENTS:	117

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

In this scattered and extensive area of 246,645 acres, regular and systematic cleansing of the main settlement groups has been maintained. The areas served are:-

Bellingham.	Wark.	Rochester.
Reedsmouth.	Falstone.	Otterburn.
Greenhaugh.	Birtley.	East Woodburn.
Kirkharle.	Ridsdale.	West Woodburn.
Kirkwhelpington.	Gt.Bavington.	Little Bavington.

Number of properties serviced: 972.

Tips: There are 6 tips in the area situate at:-

Birtley.	Woodburn.	Knowesgate.
Otterburn.	Falstone.	Bellingham.

Vehicle: Karrier Bantam Refuse Vehicle.

Employees: 1 Loader-driver and 2 loaders.

Tonnage for year: 1,716 tons.

Cost for year: £1,594. 3. 0d.

HOUSING (CONSOLIDATED) REGULATIONS, 1925.

Tabular Statement for Year 1952.

HOUSES COMPLETED DURING THE YEAR.		With State Assistance.	Unaided.	Total.
(a) By Local Authority	(Permanent	12	-	12
	(Temporary	-	-	-
(b) By other Bodies or Persons.	(Permanent	-	3	3
	(Temporary	-	-	-

RURAL HOUSING SURVEY.

1.

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

CATEGORY.	CLASSIFICATION.	NUMBER.
1.	Satisfactory in all respects.	18
2.	Minor defects.	3
3.	Requiring repair, structural alteration or improvement.	5
4.	A ppropriate for reconditioning under Housing(Rural Workers)Acts.	-
5.	Unfit for habitation and beyond repair at reasonable expense.	4
	TOTAL:	30

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or its officers ... ... 48.

3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS:

A. Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 & 16 of Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:-

(a) By owners ... ... Nil.

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners Nil. Nil.

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ... Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:

(a) By owners ... ... Nil.

(b) By L. A. in default of owners. . Nil. Nil.

C. Proceedings under Sections 11 & 13 of Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... ... Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. .. Nil.

(3) Number of dwelling houses closed but not demolished (H. A. 1949, Sec. 3). ... ... 1.

D. Proceedings under Section 12 of Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made. Nil.

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... ... Nil.

4. NUMBER OF HOUSES PERMANENTLY DISCONTINUED AS DWELLINGS AND NOT INCLUDED ABOVE ... ... 4.

HOUSING ACT, 1949. (Sec.20)

(a) Number of separate dwelling houses in respect of which applications for grant have been received. Nil.

(b) Number of separate dwelling houses in respect of which applications for grant have been approved. Nil.

	Number of Inspections during the year.	Number of defects of Contraventions of Bye-laws.	Number of Informal Notices served.	Defects remedied by informal action.	Number of Statutory Notices served.	Defects remedied after Statutory Notice.	Legal Proceedings.
HOUSING.							
Structural defects	126	38	73	43			
Defective food store	56	14	49	39			
D ampness	231	38	74	27			
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-			
WATER SUPPLY.							
Insufficient	162	5					
Unsatisfactory	152	6					
DRAINAGE.							
Insufficient	197	37	37	37			
Defective	212	28	28	28			
SANITARY CONVENIENCES.							
Insufficient	187	3	3	3			
Defective	165	5	5	5			
Food premises.	89						
Shops Act.	-						
Dairies.	4						
Slaughterhouses.	2						
Tents, vans, etc.	-						
Offensive trades.	-						
Factories and workplaces.	58						
Keeping of animals.	-						
Insanitary ashpits & receptacles.	39	39	39	39			
Offensive accumulations.	-						
Smoke nuisances.	-						
TOTALS:	1630	213	308	221			

SUMMARY OF WORKS EFFECTED.

	By Informal Action.	By Statutory Notice.	TOTAL.
SANITARY CONVENIENCES.			
Privies & Privy ashpits abolished.	24		24
Privies & Privy ashpits repaired.	5		5
Pail closets abolished.	12		12
Wa ter Closets provided.	54		54
Number of above for which grant was given (P.H.A.1936,Sec.47)	3		3
Sanitary bins provided.	12		12
Sanitary bins renewed.	4		4
DRAINAGE.			
New drains constructed.	75		75
Drains repaired or reconstructed.	8		8
Additional gullies provided.	55		55
Old gullies replaced.	12		12
Scullery sinks provided.	9		9
Scullery waste-pipes repaired.	11		11
Scullery waste-pipes trapped.	-		-
Yards repaired or reconstructed.	4		4

WATER SUPPLY.

Sources closed or discontinued ....9..... No. of houses ....9.....

New services provided:

(a) By Ncle. & Gateshead Water Co. ....14..... No. of houses ....14.....

(b) By Private Owner ... ...27..... No. of houses ....27....

Number of dwelling houses supplied by (a) internal tap ....1,006.....

(b) standpipe ....583.....

Water Samples.

During the year 15 samples for bacteriological examination were taken.

FOOD INSPECTION.

UNSOUND FOOD.		Surrendered.	Seized.	Legal Proceedings.
1. Beef (Home killed)	Stones.	19½		
2. Beef (Imported)	"	-		
3. Mutton (Home killed)	"	-		
4. Mutton (Imported)	"	-		
5. Pork (Home killed)	"	1 st. 10¼ lb.		
6. Pork (Imported)	"	-		
7. Fruit	Lbs.	50		
8. Canned goods	Tins.	8		
9. Bacon	Lbs.	-		
10. Other Foods.		-		

BYE-LAWS (Food and Drugs Act, 1938 - Section 15) provide an effective approach towards a higher standard of cleanliness in food premises and have been used to advantage.